

Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

Statement on the Observance of Passover

April 14, 2014

Michelle and I send our warmest greetings to all those celebrating Passover in the United States, in Israel, and around the world.

On Tuesday, just as we have every year of my Presidency, my family will join the millions taking part in the ancient tradition of the Seder. We will enjoy the company of friends and loved ones, retell a timeless story, and give thanks for the freedom we are so blessed to enjoy.

Yet, even as we celebrate, our prayers will be with the people of Overland Park, Kansas, and the family and friends of the three innocent people who were killed when a gunman, just 1 day before Passover, opened fire at a Jewish community center and retirement home on Sunday. As Americans, we will continue to stand united against this kind of terrible violence, which has no place in our society. We will continue to come together across faiths to combat the ignorance and intolerance, including anti-Semitism, that can lead to hatred and violence. And we will never lose faith that compassion and justice will ultimately triumph over hate and fear.

For that is one of the great lessons of the Exodus. The tale of the Hebrew slaves and their flight from Egypt carries the hope and promise that the Jewish people have held in their hearts for thousands of years, and it has inspired countless generations in their own struggles for freedom around the globe.

In America, the Passover story has always had special meaning. We come from different places and diverse backgrounds, but we are bound together by a journey from bondage to liberty enshrined in our founding documents and continued in each generation. As we were so painfully reminded on Sunday, our world is still in need of repair, but the story of the Exodus teaches us that with patience, determination, and abundant faith, a brighter future is possible. *Chag Sameach.*

NOTE: The statement referred to William L. Corporon, Reat G. Underwood, and Terri LaManno, who were killed in the April 13 shootings at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City and Village Shalom assisted living center in Overland, KS; and Frazier Glenn Miller, Jr., the suspected gunman.

Categories: Statements by the President : Passover.

Names: Corporon, William L.; LaManno, Terri; Miller, Frazier Glenn, Jr.; Obama, Michelle; Underwood, Reat G.

Subjects: Civil rights : Minorities :: Anti-Semitism; Holidays and special observances : Passover; Kansas : Shootings in Overland Park.

DCPD Number: DCPD201400266.